

## NOTES AND NEWS.

MR. EDWARD HARGITT, a Corresponding Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at his home in Edinburgh, March 19, 1895, in the sixtieth year of his age. Mr. Hargitt was an artist of eminent standing, as well as an ornithologist, having been made in 1887 a member of the Royal Institute. His interest in birds was general, and he had at one time acquired a large collection of the birds of Northern Europe and Asia, but lack of accommodation for its storage led him later to disperse it, the greater part going to the British Museum. He selected, however, the Woodpeckers as his special field of study, and will be long known as an authority on this group through his admirable monograph forming Vol. XVIII of the 'Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum.' From 'The Ibis' we learn that he "worked continuously at a series of paintings to form a monographical gallery of the Picidæ, illustrating every type in British and foreign museums, and giving colored portraits of every variation in plumage." He was never strong, we learn from the same authority, "having for years been an uncomplaining martyr to asthma." He is spoken of as "a very quiet, unobtrusive man, generous almost to a fault," and "chivalrous in the highest sense of word."

MR. JOHN S. CAIRNS, an Associate Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, was killed June 10, 1895, by the accidental discharge of his gun while on a collecting trip with a party of friends to Black Mountain, North Carolina. Mr. Cairns was a prominent and popular citizen of Weaverville, N. C., where he was buried with Masonic honors. Although Mr. Cairns had published little, his untimely and sad death is a distinct loss to ornithology, his researches in the vicinity of Asheville, North Carolina, having given him an intimate knowledge of the birds of that region. Fortunately some of his notes, generously sent to ornithologists with whom he was in correspondence, may yet see the light. A letter to the editors of 'The Auk' from a prominent ornithologist speaks of him as a thoroughly trustworthy observer, and "one of the most generous men that ever lived." He was interested in other departments of natural history, especially in mammals. He was a son of Captain John Cairns of Weaverville.

THE HON. FRANKLIN FAIRBANKS, of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, an Associate Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died in that city on April 24, 1895, at the age of 67 years. He was the youngest of four sons of the late Governor Erastus Fairbanks of Vermont. At the time of his death he was President of the well-known Fairbanks Scales Com-

pany, and was prominent in railroad, banking and other business enterprises, and conspicuously active in educational and philanthropic works. His intelligent interest in natural history was especially manifested through his gift, in 1891, to his native city of the Fairbanks Museum of Natural History. He had been an Associate Member of the A. O. U. since 1885, but his relation to ornithology was mainly that of a promoter of the science.

MR. GEORGE H. RAGSDALE, of Gainesville, Cooke Co., Texas, an Associate Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at his home in Gainesville, March 25, 1895. Mr. Ragsdale has been a frequent contributor for the last ten years to 'The Auk' and other natural history journals of interesting field notes respecting the ornithology of Cooke County, Texas, with which he was especially familiar, and did much to popularize natural history through his contributions to the local newspapers, with one of which, 'The Hesperian,' he was editorially associated.

THE REV. A. H. GESNER, of Sing Sing, N. Y., an Associate Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at his home in that city, April 30, 1895. Mr. Gesner was a well-known clergyman of the Episcopal Church, and for many years had taken an intelligent interest in ornithology, making frequent excursions afield to study the ways of his bird friends, but he has left few published records of his observations.

AS THESE pages go to press the sad announcement reaches us of the death of Professor Thomas H. Huxley, an Honorary Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, who died on the afternoon of June 29, at the age of 70 years. A notice of his life and works, and particularly his important contributions to ornithology, is necessarily deferred to a later issue of this journal.

WE HAVE just received from the publisher, David Douglas (10 Castle Street, Edinburgh), a copy of the long hoped for English translation of Herr Gätke's 'Die Vogelwarte Helgoland,' published in 1891 (see Auk, VIII, 1891, p. 299). The translation bears the title 'Heligoland as an Ornithological Observatory: The Result of Fifty Years' Experience,' and is made by Mr. Rudolph Rosenstock. The preface to the English edition is by Mr. John A. Harvie-Brown, who is, as he expresses it, "in a measure, godfather to this edition of Mr. Gätke's Observations on the avifauna of Heligoland." A further notice of this important work will be given in a later number of this journal.

THE NUTTALL ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB of Cambridge, Mass., is about to publish as No. 2 of its 'Memoirs,' a monograph of the Ipswich Sparrow by Jonathan Dwight, Jr., M.D. The memoir will treat the subject exhaustively, being based on the existing literature of the subject, supplemented by the author's extensive field experience of the bird's habits as observed on our own coasts, and by his researches at Sable Island in 1894, where he had an opportunity of studying its breeding habits and obtained its nests, eggs, and young in first plumage. The paper also includes a pretty full account of Sable Island, its history, fauna, flora, etc., and a very complete bibliography of the Ipswich Sparrow. It will be illustrated with a colored plate, showing the adult breeding male and the young in first plumage.

A PROSPECTUS from the publishers, Charles H. Sergel Company (358 Dearborn St., Chicago), announces the early publication of 'The Proceedings of the World's Congress of Ornithology,' containing the papers read at the World's Congress Auxiliary on Ornithology, held at the Memorial Art Palace of the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Oct. 18-21, 1893 (see *Auk*, X, p. 386, and XI, p. 89). It will form a single octavo volume, prepared under the editorship of Mrs. E. Irene Rood, and the edition will be limited to 600 numbered and registered copies. Subscription price, \$5.00 net. From the partial list of contents given in the prospectus it is evident that the work will contain many papers of permanent value, and from contributors of eminent standing.

IT is announced that a General Index to the 18 volumes of 'The Ibis,' published from 1877 to 1894, is in course of preparation, together with a Subject Index to the whole work since its commencement in 1859. In order to provide funds for the large outlay involved, an appeal has been made to the members of the B. O. U. for subscriptions to the work, which of course will be of immense convenience to ornithologists the world over. Orders for copies may be sent to F. D. Godman, Esq., 10 Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, W. The subscription price is 21 shillings per copy.

READERS of 'The Auk' will be interested to learn that the second volume of Major Bendire's standard work 'Life Histories of North American Birds' will probably be issued during the coming autumn. Of the text it is unnecessary to speak, but we are glad to be able to state that the plates will be of the same high character as those which distinguished the first volume.

DURING the present session of the Connecticut legislature, a bill was introduced providing for the payment, by the State, of a bounty for killing Hawks and Owls. Active opposition to the bill was made by an official of the A. O. U., and several others. Facts were presented to the Committee on Agriculture, to whom the bill was referred, showing that Hawks and Owls, as a class, are beneficial to the farmer. An adverse report was made by the Committee and the obnoxious bill defeated when it came up for action in the House.

MR. GEORGE K. CHERRIE of the Field Columbian Museum, whose departure for San Domingo to make ornithological collections was noticed in the January 'Auk,' has returned after an absence of five months. In spite of the hardships occasioned by an unusually wet season and the inhospitality of the degraded negroes of the interior, Mr. Cherrie was eminently successful and his collection of 2,000 birds and extended field notes will form the basis of valuable papers by Mr. Chas. B. Cory and himself on the avi-fauna of this comparatively little known island.

'THE NIDIOLOGIST' for May announces that Dr. R. W. Shufeldt has joined forces with Mr. H. R. Taylor in the editorial management of this enterprising journal, an arrangement which will undoubtedly add to its increasing popularity.

SOMETHING quite new in the line of bird exhibits has recently been placed before the public in the Agassiz Museum of Comparative Zoölogy at Cambridge, Mass., in the W. E. D. Scott Collection of mounted birds, first opened for inspection June 18 of the present year. The exhibit consists at present of fifty-six cases, containing about 250 specimens, the beginning of a collection which it is hoped will some day surpass in interest, instructiveness, and artistic effect anything the world has yet seen in the way of a museum exhibition of birds. Each case is devoted to a single species, the cases varying in size with the species it is designed to illustrate. The purpose of the work is not only to show birds in life-like and natural attitudes and surroundings, but to illustrate special facts in ornithology, as variations due to sex, age and reason, dichromatism, geographical variation, protective coloration, etc. This is a plan Mr. Scott has long had in mind, and with his well-known skill and taste as a taxidermist, his intelligence and training as a naturalist, and his wide-field experience we may well anticipate the production of a collection of mounted birds far in advance of any hitherto attempted. The expense of the undertaking, which will of course be large, we understand is defrayed by friends of the museum, and we trust that there will be no lack of funds for such a meritorious work.